

Message Text

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O R 131030Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7040

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL DANANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CINCUSARPAC FT SHAFTER HI

CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI

CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI

CG FMFPAC

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DAO SAIGON AOSOP-OR

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 SAIGON 16358

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJ: VIET-NAM CEASE-FIRE WEEKLY ASSESSMENT, SEPTEMBER 5-11, 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS WERE AT A MARKEDLY HIGH LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, EXCEPT IN MR 3. BOTH MR 2 AND MR 4 REPORTED SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN INCIDENTS, AND THERE WAS NO DECREASE FROM LAST WEEK'S POST-CEASEFIRE II HIGH IN MR 1. WITH VERY FEW EXCEPTIONS, HOWEVER, THERE WAS A NOTABLE LACK OF ACTUAL COMBAT. IN SOUTHERN MR 1, THE ENEMY IS STEPPING UP HARASSMENT IN THE LOWLANDS, ESPECIALLY AT RTV SITES. IN MR 2, SIGNIFICANT GROUND COMBAT CONTINUES IN BINH DINH AND IS ON THE RISE IN PHU YEN, BUT THE NVA HAS YET TO REACT TO ARVN'S RECAPTURE OF TRUNG NGHIA LAST WEEKEND. THERE WERE CLASHES IN MR 3 IN PHUOC LONG, HAU NGHIA, AND LONG AN. FEW AREAS IN MR 4 ESCAPED THE GENERAL RISE IN VIOLENCE, THOUGH IN CONCENTRATED FORM IT REMAINED CENTERED IN CHUONG THIEN AND ITS ENVIRONS AND, SECONDARILY, IN WESTERN DINH TUONG AND CONTIGUOUS AREAS OF KIEN PHONG AND KIEN TUONG. THE GVN HAS WIDELY PUBLICIZED AND PROTESTED TO THE DRV, THE PRG TPJMC DEL AND THE ICCS TWO "GRAVE VIOLATIONS" OF THE PARIS ACCORDS: THE RECONSTRUCTION AND FORTIFICATION OF TWELVE AIR STRIPS IN PRG-HELD TERRITORY AND THE OFF-LOADING OF A CHINESE CARGO VESSEL AT DONG HA PORT.

PART I: ICCS

ICCS CHIEFS OF DEL AND THEIR MILITARY DEPUTIES ACCOMPANIED PRG TPJMC CHIEF, GEN HOANG ANH TUAN, TO LOC NINH ON THE SEPT 12 LIAISON FLIGHT. ICCS SOURCES HAVE NOT INFORMED US OF THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT TO PRG HEADQUARTERS, BUT GVN TPJMC MEMBERS ARE CONVINCED THAT IT MUST BE RELATED TO THE WIDE-RANGING DRV/PRG CAMPAIGN TO CURTAIL THE ICCS.
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PART II: DOCKING OF CHINESE SHIP AT DONG HA SPARKS VIETNAMESE LUTTE BERBALE

1. THE GVN AND VIET CONG CONTINUED THEIR VERBAL BATTLE OVER THE SEPT 1 CALL AT CUA VIET PORT BY A CHINESE FREIGHTER CARRYING "EMERGENCY" AID GOODS. THE SHIPMENT WAS SAID TO BE THE FIRST INSTALLMENT UNDER AN AGREEMENT SIGNED IN PEKING LAST JULY.
2. GVN SPOKESMEN INITIALLY REACTED WITH SCORN, POINTING OUT THAT THE RECEIPT OF GOODS FROM THE PRC SERVED ONLY TO PROVE THAT THE SO-CALLED PRG IS A TOOL OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND FOREIGN COMMUNISTS. BY SEPT 5, HOWEVER, THE GVN CHANGED ITS TUNE: DERISION WAS REPLACED BY CONCERN. THE FONMIN SPOKESMAN LABELED THE INCIDENT A "GRAVE ACTION" WHICH "SERIOUSLY VIOLATES" THE 1954 GENEVA ACCORDS AS WELL AS THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. IGNORING

THE COMMUNISTS' ASSERTIONS THAT THE SHIPMENT CONTAINED "ECONOMIC AID" ITEMS, THE GVN BLASTED CHINA FOR THE "INTRODUCTION" OF WAR MATERIEL IN CONTRAVENTION OF ARTICLE 7 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND OF THE PRC'S PLEDGE AS A SIGNATORY OF THE FINAL ACT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VIET-NAM, TO RESPECT THAT AGREEMENT. THE GVN ALSO DEMANDED THAT THE ICCS INVESTIGATE "THIS ILLEGAL SUPPLY OPERATION."

3. ON SEPT 7 THE VIET CONG FONMIN REPLIED TO THE GVN CHARGES. REFERRING TO THEM AS "ODIOUS, SLANDEROUS ALLEGATIONS," THE MINISTRY CONTENDED THAT RECEIVING AID TO "RESTORE AND DEVELOP THE ECONOMY IN THE LIBERATED AREAS" FALLS WITHIN "THE PRGRSV'S FUNCTIONS AND COMPETENCE AND IS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT." IT INDICATED THAT THE VIET CONG "WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM ALL COUNTRIES." SUBSEQUENTLY, ON SEPT 10 LIBERATION RADIO CLAIMED THAT THE "PRG" IS A "SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT" WHICH CONTROLS "VAST AREAS" INCLUDING LAND AND SEA LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH "FOREIGN COUNTRIES." THE RECEIPT OF AID GOODS FROM THE PRC, SAID THE BROADCAST, IS "FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE SOVEREIGNTY OF A LEGAL GOVERNMENT."

HANOI'S RESPONSE TO USG/GVN PROTEST NOTES

1. HANOI GAVE A CAREFULLY MEASURED RESPONSE TO THE SEPT 10 NOTES
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FROM THE US AND GVN PROTESTING THE COMMUNISTS' REFURBISHING OF AIRFIELDS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND HANOI'S DEPLOYMENT OF MISSILE UNITS SOUTH OF THE DMZ. FAR FROM DENYING US/GVN CHARGES, HANOI'S FONMIN SPOKESMAN ATTEMPTED TO JUSTIFY THE ACTIVITY ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE VIET CONG'S "PRG" HAS THE "RIGHT TO DECIDE ALL MATTERS IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE, DEFEND ITS SOVEREIGNTY, TERRITORY, AIRSPACE AND TERRITORIAL WATERS..." HE WARNED THAT SHOULD THE US OR GVN "RECKLESSLY ENCROACH ON THE TERRITORY, AIRSPACE AND TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE PRGRSV, THEY WILL SURELY BE APPROPRIATELY PUNISHED BY THE PEOPLE AND P.L.A.F. OF SOUTH VIETNAM."

2. IN ITS RESPONSE, HANOI DID NOT DISPUTE DIRECTLY THE GVN'S CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL OF SOUTH VIETNAM BUT CHOSE INSTEAD TO ATTACK AS "LUDICROUS AND TOTALLY ILLEGAL" THE PROPOSITION THAT THE GVN ALONE "CONTROLS SOUTH VIETNAMESE TERRITORY, AIRSPACE AND TERRITORIAL WATERS." IN FACT, THE GVN DID NOT MAKE SUCH A CLAIM.

COMMENT: HANOI'S WAFFLING ON THE ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY IS THE PRODUCT OF AN APPARENTLY YET-TO-BE-RESOLVED LEGAL DILEMMA. IF IT MAKES AN UNQUALIFIED AND SPECIFIC CLAIM OF PRG SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE PRG'S PRESENT AREA OF CONTROL IN SVN, IT ACCEPTS HALF A LOAF. THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE IS TO CLAIM SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL OF SOUTH VIETNAM - A CLAIM WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY BE DEMONSTRABLY

LUDICROUS GIVEN THE REALITIES ON THE GROUND, BUT WOULD ALSO CONTRAVENE
THE PARIS AGREEMENT. : END COMMENT.

PART III: TPJMC

1. IN SPITE OF GEN TUAN'S ASSURANCES TO GEN THUAN ON SEPT 4 THAT THE PRG DEL WAS PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS, SUBSEQUENT TPJMC CHIEF OF DEL MEETINGS HAVE NOT FOCUSED ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MILITARY PROVISIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE. AT THE SEPT 7 MEETING, THE GVN STRONGLY PROTESTED THE DOCKING OF THE CHINESE CARGO VESSEL AT PRG-CONTROLLED DONG HA PORT, WHILE THE PRG ATTEMPTED TO INVOLVE THE TPJMC WITH ITS CAMPAIGN TO CURTAIL THE ICCS. THE GVN DEL TOOK EXCEPTION TO THE PRG ASSERTION THAT THE ICCS HAD LARGELY FULFILLED ITS TASKS AND DECLINED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER AS BEING OUTSIDE THE COMPETENCE OF THE TPJMC. THE SEPT 11
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MEETING WAS CHARACTERIZED BY A MEMBER OF THE GVN DEL AS "AN EXCHANGE OF ACCUSATIONS." IT WAS AT THIS MEETING THAT THE GVN PROTESTED THE RECONSTRUCTION AND FORTIFICATION OF MILITARY AIRFIELDS IN TERRITORY PRESENTLY CONTROLLED BY THE PRG.

2. ON SEPT 11, THE GVN DEL ALSO DELIVERED A LETTER TO THE ICCS CHAIRMAN (STAWIARSKI OF POLAND) CHARGING THAT THE CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR OF THE TWELVE AIRFIELDS AND THE INFILTRATION OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS AND SAM 2 MISSILES FOR THEIR PROTECTION CONSTITUTES A VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 7 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AS WOULD ALSO THE INTRODUCTION OF WEAPONS AND WAR MATERIALS THROUGH THESE AIRFIELDS. THE ICCS WAS REQUESTED TO COMPEL THE PRGRSVN AND DRV TO END THE VIOLATIONS.

PART IV: FPJMT

THE DRV AND PRG ELDS TO THE FPJMT CONTINUE TO PREVENT THE FPJMT FROM CARRYING OUT ITS ASSIGNED TASKS. AT THE SEPT 11 SESSION THE TWO DELS FOR THE FIRST TIME OPENLY LINKED IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 8B TO PROGRESS BEING MADE IN IMPLEMENTING (BEGIN UNDERLINE) ALL (END UNDERLINE) OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT.

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AMCONSUL DANANG
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USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
CINCUSARPAC FT SHAFTER HI
CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI
CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI
CG FMFPAC
CDR USSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE
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DAO SAIGON AOSOP-OR
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 SAIGON 16358/2
LIMDIS
PART V: MR-1

1. ACCORDING TO MR-1 HEADQUARTERS THERE WERE ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-TWO CEASE FIRE VIOLATIONS FURING THE WEEK. THIS IS A DAILY AVERAGE OF TWENTY-ONE, ONLY ONE BELOW LAST WEEK'S RECORD HIGH SINCE THE SECOND CEASEFIRE. GVN CASUALTIES: SIXTY-SIX KIA; TWO HUNDRED EIGHT-SEVEN WIA. PRG/NVA LOSSES: ONE HUNDRED FIVE KIA; NINE RETURNEES.

2. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN QUANG TRI-THUA THIEN CONTINUES AT THE

SAME LEVEL AS LAST WEEK. GROUND ATTACKS AND ATTACKS BY FIRE (ABF) CAUSED ONE HUNDRED SIX CASUALTIES FOR GVN, WHILE MINE ACCOUNTED FOR ONLY EIGHTEEN. PROVINCE OFFICE DIRECTOR REPORTS MOST CASUALTIES WERE SUFFERED BY THIRD AND FIFTY-FOURTH REGIMENTS. MARINE AND AIRBORNE AREAS WERE GENERALLY QUIET. ARVN ENGINEERS ARE NOW SURVEYING AN ALTERNATE TRAIL ROUTE FROM THE END OF THE REBUILT ROAD TO THE OUTPOST AT THE SUMMIT OF BACH MA IN THUA THIEN PROVINCE. WHEN CLEARED, THIS WILL GIVE RESUPPLY COLUMNS A CHOICE OF TWO TRAILS, THUS LIMITING THE POSSIBILITY OF AMBUSH AND REDUCING THE TRAFFIC-LOAD WHICH, WHEN COMBINED WITH THE COMING RAINS, CAUSES RAPID DETERIORATION.

3. BELOW THE HAI VAN PASS THE MILITARY SITUATION REMAINS GENERALLY UNCHANGED. HOWEVER, AS FORECAST BY GVN INTELLIGENCE, THE VC HAVE INCREASED HARASSMENT OF RETURN-TO-VILLAGE (RTV) SITES: ON SEPT 6 THEY DAMAGED MORE THAN 300 HOUSES AT AN RTV SITE IN QUANG NGAI, ON SEPT 8 TWO CIVILIANS WERE WOUNDED BY A GRENADE AT AN RTV SITE IN QUANG NAM, AND ON SEPT 9 TWO PERSONS WERE KILLED AND ONE WOUNDED IN A MORTAR ATTACK ON ANOTHER QUANG NGAI RESETTLEMENT AREA. ON SEPT 10, A GRENADE KILLED THREE PERSONS AND WOUNDED 50 DURING A FILM SHOW IN DUC PHO DISTRICT TOWN, QUANG NGAI. MINES TOOK A HEAVY TOLL (106 CASUALTIES) IN QUANG NGAI, AND IN QUIET QUANG TIN, ACCOUNTED FOR ALL 18 OF THE WEEK'S CASUALTIES.

4. COLONEL TAM, CHIEF OF GVN TPJMC IN REGION 1, HAS LEARNED THAT THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS HAVE ORDERS TO WITHDRAW THEIR QUANG TRI
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AND PHU BAI TEAMS TO HUE, POSSIBLY DURING THE WEEK OF SEPT 16. THE DEPARTING CHIEF OF THE POLISH DELEGATION IN REGION 1 WAS URGED BY THE INDODEL CHIEF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS TO DEPLOY TEAMS TO GIO LINH, BUT REPLIED THAT THIS MUST AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF THE IRANIANS. HE TOLD COLONEL TAM THAT THE ICCS WILL DEPLOY WHEN ALL FOUR PARTIES ARE PRESENT AND THAT HE HAD INSPECTED QUARTERS AT GIO LINH AND LAO BAO TWICE AND FOUND BOTH SATISFACTORY, ALTHOUGH AT LAO BAO THERE WERE ONLY BAMBOO AND THATACH HOUSES. INDODEL HAS PROMISED TO KEEP COLONEL TAM FULLY BRIEFED ON SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS ARISING DURING THE WEEKLY MEETINGS BETWEEN THE QUANG TRI ICCS TEAMS AND THE PRG. INDODEL APPEARED UNAWARE, HOWEVER, OF THE RVN COMPLAINT CONCERNING THE OFF-LOADING OF THE CHICOM VESSEL AT DONG HA.

PART VI: MR 2

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR 2 INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY DURING THE PAST WEEK WITH 159 INCIDENTS REPORTED VS 113 FOR THE PREVIOUS REPORTING PERIOD. MOST OF THESE INCIDENTS WERE LISTED AS ENEMY-INITIATED ABF TO WHICH THE RVNAF RESPONDED. INCIDENTS WERE CONCENTRATED IN BINH DINH (78), PHU YEN (33), KONTUM (29) AND PLEIKU (14). CASUALTIES INCREASED MARKEDLY: VC/NVA 316 KIA (VS 152 LAST WEEK), 8 CAPTURED (VS 0); RVNAF: 38 KIA (VS 29),

181 WIA (VS 124), 14 MIA (VS 3). THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 351 AIR STRIKES, MOST OF THEM CONCENTRATED IN BINH DINH, KONTUM AND PLEIKU.

2. ARVN FORCES RETOOK TRUNG NGHIA VILLAGE, WEST OF KONTUM CITY, ON SEPT 7 AND 8. (GEN TOAN PLANS TO RESETTLE THE VILLAGE'S OLD RESIDENTS BACK IN THEIR HOME AREA IN A FEW WEEKS). THE TROOPS WHO TOOK TRUNG NGHIA HAVE NOT YET MOVED ON TO RETAKE POLEI KRONG, THOUGH OTHER ARVN UNITS HAVE REACHED THE POKO/YA KRONG BOLAH RIVER SOUTH OF ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE DAK BLA AND ARE ALREADY IN A POSITION ACROSS THE DAK BLA FROM POLEI KRONG. THE ENEMY APPEARS TO BE REGROUPING IN THE HILLS NORTH OF TRUNG NGHIA.

3. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN PHU YEN HAS BEEN INCREASING. PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN RESPONDING TO ENEMY ATTACKS WITH RETRIBUTIVE AIR STRIKES IN THE ENEMY'S 236 BASE AREA, AND DURING THE PAST WEEK THIS TIT-FOR-TAT POLICY BECAME MORE AGGRESSIVE: RVNAF UNITS
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MOUNTED A MULTI-BATTALION-SIZE OPERATION IN NORTHWESTERN TUY AN DISTRICT (ALONG THE 236 BASE AREA BORDER). ENEMY LOSSES WERE SIGNIFICANT, WITH AT LEAST 31 KIA AND 28 SMALL ARMS CAPTURED, WHILE THE RVNAF REPORTED ONLY ONE KILLED.

4. EFFORTS BY THE 22ND DIV IN TAM QUAN DISTRICT, BINH DINH TO EXPAND GVN TERRITORIAL CONTROL HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN HALTED BY THE INCREASINGLY HEAVY ENEMY REACTION THERE. THE 22ND DIV. HAS DESIGNATED A PORTION OF THE AN DO VALLEY, EXTENDING FROM THREE KM WEST OF TAM QUAN DISTRICT TOWN TO SEVEN KM NORTHWEST, AS AN ARTILLERY AND AIR STRIKE ZONE AND IS CONSTRUCTING THE NORTHERN-MOST OF SIX NEW OUTPOSTS JUST INSIDE THE SOUTHWESTERN CORNER OF THIS ZONE. THE DEPUTY G-2 OF THE DIV. HAS STATED THAT ELEMENTS OF THE DIVISION HAD BEEN SLATED TO MOVE FURTHER WEST, TOWARDS THE AN LAO VALLEY, BUT HAD BEEN CONSTRAINED FROM DOING SO BECAUSE OF RECENT INCREASED ENEMY ACTIVITY. THE ENEMY, HE SAID, WAS NO LONGER SIMPLY REACTING BUT WAS NOW ON THE ATTACK. SPECIFICALLY, 22ND DIV PLANNERS FEAR THE TAM QUAN TERRITORIAL FORCES WILL BE INCAPABLE OF PROTECTING THE LOWLANDS SHOULD ARVN UNITS DEPLOY FURTHER WEST. (THE INCREASED HOSTILITIES OF THE PAST FEW DAYS HAVE ALREADY CASUED THE MOVEMENT OF OVER 700 PEOPLE FROM AREAS TO THE NORTH INTO TAM QUAN DISTRICT TOWN). THE G-2'S FEAR REGARDING RF CAPABILITIES IS UNDOUBTEDLY COLORED BY THE ATTACK OF AN ENEMY BATTALION ON THE RF BN AT BONG SON ON SEPT 8, IN WHICH RF LOSSES WERE 17 KIA, 4 WIA AND 7 MIA.

PART VII MR 3

1. DURING THE WEEK ENDING 0800 SEPT 12, THE WAR PERKED ALONG AT ABOUT THE SAME INTENSITY AS THE PREVIOUS WEEK. REGION INCIDENTS GENERALLY REMAINED SCATTERED, WITH COMMUNIST FORCES NOT HOLDING CONTACT FOR EXTENDED PERIODS. MININGS, MINOR ABF, HARASSMENT FIRE, LOC AND RAIL INTERDICTIONS APPEARED TO BE THE

MAJOR OBJECTIVES. AN EXCEPTION TO THIS WAS IN PHUOC LONG, WHERE
VC/NVA EFFORTS TO CUT QL-14 WERE MET WITH STIFF RF RESISTANCE
(PARA 3). HEAVY CLASHES WERE ALSO REPORTED IN HAU NGHIA PROVINCE
NEAR CU CHI ON SEPT 8 AND IN LONG AN PROVINCE NEAR RACH KIEN
ON SEPT 6. THE MR G-2 REPORTED 108 INCIDENTS, COMPARED WITH 111
THE PREVIOUS WEEK; PRINCIPALLY IN HAU NGHIA (19), BINH DUONG (16)
AND GIA DINH (12). THE SURPRISING NUMBER IN GIA DINH WERE EXPLAINED
AS MINE AND BOOBY TRAP INCIDENTS OCCURRING PRINCIPALLY IN BINH CHANH
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AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 SAIGON 16358

LIMDIS

5. HAU NGHIA PROVINCE CHIEF INFORMED ARRO THAT HUNGARIAN TEAM LEADER (CURRENT ICCS CHAIRMAN IN CU CHI) ON SEPT 11 REQUESTED APPOINTMENT FOR SEPT 14. PROVINCE CHIEF, EXPECTING HUNGARIAN CEASE-FIRE VIOLATION COMPLAINT OVER RECENT GVN/VC CLASHED IN HAU NGHIA, REJECTED REQUEST PENDING FORMATION OF "COMPLETE ICCS TEAM" FOLLOWING ARRIVAL OF IRANIANS.

PART VII MR 4

1. MR 4 REPORTED 363 ALLEGED VC,NVA CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING AT 0600 HOURS SEPT 5 AND ENDING 0600 HOURS SEPT 12. THIS FIGURE REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN DELTA COMBAT FROM THE 232 INCIDENTS REPORTED FOR THE PRECEDING 7-DAY PERIOD. CASUALTIES ANNOUNCED FOR THE WEEK - 154 RVNAF KILLED, 719 WOUNDED, AND 41 MISSING, AND 403 VC/NVA KILLED AND 15 CAPTURED - WERE SLIGHTLY LESS THAN THOSE OF AUG 29-SEPT 5. ON AUG 31 THE ASSIGNED STRENGTH OF ARVN UNITS IN MR 4 (EXCLUDING VNAF, NAVY, RF AND PF) WAS REPORTED AS 59,547 OR 90.7 PERCENT OF AUTHORIZED STRENGTH OF 65,642. ACTUAL PRESENT FOR DUTY STRENGTH IS PROBABLY CLOSER TO 75 PERCENT OF AUTHORIZED STRENGTH.

2. THE PRINCIPAL AREAS OF COMBAT IN THE DELTA CONTINUE TO BE CHUONG THIEN AND ITS ENVIRONS AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, DINH TUONG AND THE ADJACENT DISTRICTS OF KIEN PHONG AND KIEN TUONG PROVINCES. FEW AREAS OF THE DELTA WERE WITHOUT VIOLENCE, HOWEVER; VINH LONG AND BAC LIEU EXPERIENCED MINOR HIGHPOINTS, AND IN NORMALLY PEACEFUL SA DEC THE VC AMBUSHED A GVN TAX COLLECTING TEAM SEPT 6, KILLING FIVE. SOME AFBS OCCURRED IN CHAU DOC PROVINCE'S GIAI MOUNTAIN AREA WHERE THE ARVN NOW HAS SIX BATTALIONS CONCENTRATED. CORPS HEADQUARTERS REPORTED 26 GROUND ATTACKS DURING THE WEEK, BUT THE FIGHTING WAS CHARACTERIZED PRINCIPALLY BY SHELLINGS OF TOWNS AND OUT POSTS. ABF AND HARASSMENTS WERE FREQUENTLY OF GREAT INTENSITY: BARRAGES OF 20 AND 30 ROUND PER INCIDENT WERE REPORTED.

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EM IN CHUONG THIEN, VI THANH RECEIVED TWO ROUNDS OF 107MM ROCKET FIRE SEPT 8, THE THIRD ROCKETTING INCIDENT IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL SINCE SEPT 4. THE VC GAVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO A GROUP OF NEWLY ESTABLISHED OUTPOSTS IN NORTHERN KIEN LONG DISTRICT. INCIDENTS RAN ABOUT 12-20 PER DAY DURING THE WEEK,

COMPARED TO A DAILY AVERAGE OF 10-15 SINCE CEASEFIRE II. THE CHUONG THIEN FIGHTING SPILLED OVER INTO CONTIGUOUS DISTRICTS OF NEIGHBORING PROVINCES. KIEN GIANG AVERAGED 12-13 INCIDENTS PER DAY LAST WEEK, CONCENTRATED IN KIEN BINH, KIEN AN, AND HIEU LE DISTRICTS BORDERING CHUONG THIEN, AND SUFFERED THE LOSS OF TWO OUTPOSTS SEPT 5 AND 8. RVNAF LOST 31 KILLED AND 109 WOUNDED IN THE PROVINCE, THE HIGHEST WEEKLY TOLL THERE SINCE CEASEFIRE II AND ABOUT EQUAL TO AUGUST'S TOTAL GVN CASUALTIES. 18 OF LAST WEEK'S 28 INCIDENTS IN AN XUYEN TOOK PLACE IN THOI BINH DISTRICT, WHICH BORDERS CHUONG THIEN. THE VC OVERRAN TWO OUTPOSTS AND THRICE SHELLED THE DISTRICT TOWN, ONCE WITH 107MM ROCKETS. BA XUYEN AVERAGED 8-9 INCIDENTS A DAY, MOSTLY SHELLINGS AND LIGHT GROUND CONTACTS, WITH A HIGH OF 23 REPORTED SEPT 7. THE OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF THESE INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN NGA NAM DISTRICT, ADJACENT TO CHUONG THIEN. ACTION CONTINUED HEAVY FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE WEEK IN PHONG DINH, ESPECIALLY IN HIEP HUNG VILLAGE, PHUNG HIEP DISTRICT, NEAR THE CHUONG THIEN BORDER, WHERE THE 478 RF BATTALION FINALLY RETOOK AN OUTPOST LOST TO THE VC FOUR DAYS EARLIER.

4. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE NORTHERN DELTA CENTERED ON NORTH-WESTERN DINH TUONG AND ADJACENT DISTRICTS OF KIEN PHONG AND KIEN TUONG. THE FIGHTING, HOWEVER, WAS SOMEWHAT LESS INTENSE THAN IN AUGUST, WHICH YIELDED THE HIGHEST CASUALTIES IN DINH TUONG SINCE THE JPUARY CEASEFIRE. LAST WEEK, DINH TUONG SECTOR REPORTED 72 INCIDENTS, MOSTLY ATTACKS BY FIRE AND BOOBY TRAPS; THIS FIGURE, HOWEVER, DOES NOT INCLUDE ACTION BY THE 7TH ARVN DIVISION, WHICH - AUGMENTED BY ELEMENTS OF THE 9TH DIVISION- HAS CONCENTRATED A FORCE OF OVER TWO REGIMENTS JUST SOUTH OF TRI PHAP VILLAGE, KIEN TUONG. WHETHER THIS CONCENTRATION IS A PRELUDE TO A SERIOUS ARVN THRUST INTO THE VC STRONGHOLD O TRI PHAP REMAINS TO BE SEEN. AT PRESENT, THE ARVN APPEARS MERELY TO BE STRENGTHENING ITS OUTPOSTS AND PROBING THE VC SUPPLY ROUTES. 30 INCIDENTS OCCURRED LAST WEEK IN NEIGHBORING KIEN PHONG, ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER AS IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK. THEY WERE CONCENTRATED

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IN KIEN VAN AND MY AN DISTRICTS, WHICH BORDER DINH TUONG. SECTOR SOURCES BELIEVE THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF VC ACTIVITY IS IN RESPONSE TO GVN PRESSURE ON VC/NVA MINI-BASE AREAS AND ON INFILTRATION ROUTE 1-A.

5. ON SEPT 10 IV CORPS COMMANDER MGEN NGHI INSTRUCTED HIS STAFF TO DEVELOP A COORDINATED ARMY/VNAF/NAVY PLAN TO COPE WITH WHAT HE SUSPECTS ARE INCREASED ENEMY EFFORTS TO INFILTRATE BY SEA ALONG THE KIEN GIANG/AN XUYEN COAST.

EMB COMMENT: ENEMY HAS BEEN REPORTED SEEKING MEANS OF CIRCUMVENTING GVN INTERDICTION OF OVERLAN

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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JAKARTA
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